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and used, and diligently put to its work in the advancement of Arabic learning in these western ends of the earth.

With regard to the *Nepos* of Freytag, the abridgment of his lexicon, we may, in closing, make a single remark. Abridgments are bad in their best estate. If a work is abridged by its author, it is usually a monster. Every thing else is apt to be so curtailed, as to give prominence to his pets, his awkward hobbies. If it is abridged by another, the process is commonly that of distillation, in which the spirit or essence is distilled *out*. The architect must plan his work at first, either large or small. He must lay his keel for a ship or a boat, and finish accordingly. A razeed thing can never be better than a deformity. But if one will perpetrate an abridgment, he is surely bound to his reader and to his bookseller, to explain on what principles the curtailment is made, else we will not buy, or so much as borrow it, lest we be deceived in our dependence on it. This, Freytag has not done in his abridgment. We find roots with unbroken masses of derivatives, or with important conjugations left out ; and we know not why. The reason may have been a good one ; but, as we know it not, we cannot trust the work. It may have been prepared for certain *chrestomathies*, or courses of Arabic reading ; but, as we are ignorant what it was designed to be used for, we can use it, with satisfaction, for nothing. Accordingly, for a work at once small, cheap, and convenient, we still cleave to Wilmet, with which we know we can read the Koran, which is fundamental in Arabic scholarship, Hariri, the great and only epic poet, the Homer of the Desert, and the life of Timur, one of the most delightful Arabic histories.

ART. VIII. — *The Life and Times of the Rev. GEORGE WHITEFIELD, M. A. By ROBERT PHILIP. One Volume. New York. 1838.*

WHITEFIELD has enjoyed a traditional reputation in some respects, no doubt, resembling that of a great player ; and, as he has left nothing behind him, in theology or literature, to

justify his celebrity as a preacher, it has seemed that he was to remain a traditional wonder of pulpit acting, and nothing more. He was to have that popular, but not wholly desirable kind of fame, which is perpetuated by anecdotes, pointed sayings, and ingenious and amusing exaggerations. We might read, that Hume thought it well worth one's while to go twenty miles out of his way to hear him ; and that Dr. Franklin, on one occasion, instead of listening to the sermon, walked from street to street in the neighbourhood, to make some exceedingly characteristic calculations of the reach of his voice. His pathos and thunders were proverbial. There was something picturesque in his preaching to thousands under the open sky, and turning every incident and object to his purpose. There was something romantic in his adventurous itinerancy on an errand of love to human beings. Surely here was material enough for stories and descriptions of the wonderful preacher.

Whitefield had evidently made a deep impression on the imaginations of the men of his day ; for, in every account they gave of his preaching, there was a distinct image of the man, of his look, his action, his fervor ; and some particular point was remembered, that he had made in his discourse. It seemed as if there was, every time, some new effect or uncommon incident, to fix the sermon in every memory, to be transmitted to at least one generation. We remember hearing two of our public men describe Whitefield many years ago. They were then aged, and disposed to value the solid more than the showy. They were of ripe years and judgment when they heard him, and, though of strong passions, yet good masters of themselves and disposed to see the whole of things. And the imagination of the one was filled with his preaching a farewell sermon on Boston Common at sunrise, and investing the new-born day with a glory the eye had never seen ; it became a religious memorial. The other dwelt upon the flight of the dove towards heaven, and gave Whitefield's action as his soul seemed to follow the waving of its wings. They had probably forgotten much of the doctrine, but the image was fixed for ever.

But what can narrative and description do to give us an idea of a great speaker ? If fond himself of contemplating renowned and useful examples, that are never to perish, he may think it a hard fate, that so much power must cease for

ever with himself, — that the subtle essence of oratory, its life and virtue, are as evanescent as a beautiful cloud or a grand thunder-peal. Roscius has a classical immortality, but it is only a name to be called and given. He is celebrated by those whom we venerate, and thus has a sort of life, and yet it is nothing. The Hermit of the Crusades has a better hold upon us ; for, though we cannot conceive his eloquence, yet we know that it set the heart of Catholic and chivalrous Europe on fire, and drove countless multitudes upon expeditions that have left their mark on all ages since. We may read descriptions of pictures, buildings, and statues, and, if we have an eye or mind for such things, we may obtain distinct, and perhaps just ideas. But how is the orator to be brought before us ? How is the ear to gather the lost note that thrilled living masses, and made them as one man ? This music cannot be written and reproduced through ages. How is the look, the movement, or even the attitude of passionate or graphic eloquence to be preserved in words ? Cardinal Maury has described Massillon. From another writer we have an elaborate account of Lord Brougham's manner. It is no matter that their descriptions are exaggerated. This may be necessary for true effect. The colossal need not be monstrous. But it is observable, that each has painted a scene rather than an individual, and given us a good idea of a result, while all the painful minuteness of description was intended, and we think in vain, to acquaint us with the means. It must always be so. The best descriptions will fail of what we most want.

Without pursuing this familiar topic, we repeat, that Whitefield may be thought to have died with his voice. And why lament it ? He had his day of glory. He had the pleasure of ceaseless activity. He had his battles and victories. He drew all eyes and ears to himself. He was not shut up in the theatre of a city, like Garrick, but sent forth his voice over the earth, day and night, in the wilderness and in the streets, amidst the blasphemies of sailors and the howling of the ocean storm, — in old, populous England, and along the scattered settlements of the new world. It is enough to have made such a stir in his own time. It need not be regretted, that a day like his has past, and that he has not left us one great sermon.

But this very obvious view of Whitefield's case is also a

very imperfect one. He has many claims to present notice. His character is original, his course original ; his errors are useful, and his sacrifices memorable. To an American it is of some account, that he made seven voyages to this country to do good, and, moreover, that his name is closely associated with the great religious movements here about the middle of the last century. It may be of some interest, that he died and was buried here. And, further, it should be considered, that, though we hear of him chiefly as an eloquent man, yet his power as an orator included qualities of mind and character, which might have made him remarkable, if he had chosen quite a different line of life. The charm was not wholly in voice and gesture. His invincible spirit, the fruit of religious faith and ardor, and not of constitutional hardihood ; his passion for activity ; his love of new results, and desire to see a changed face put upon the religious world ; his prodigal benevolence, which is seen at its height when he is in peril, or denouncing woes upon the impenitent, and which gives a reasonable air to his romance, and almost a respectable one to his “mad pranks and splendid irregularities” as a field-preacher ; his recklessness as to all temporal consequences to himself, and his absorption in the saving of souls ; his consuming desire, that others may enter into his rapture and his peace ; and, almost above all these, a childlike simplicity, an humbler sense of self, and a growing gentleness in his deportment towards his adversaries, as he lived longer among men ; these are points of character, that may well give a man figure among his contemporaries, and a higher distinction than mere eloquence could obtain.

But we are asked, Where then are his monuments ? Could *all* perish of so much power, ardor, and effort, and in less than seventy years from his death ? It might be replied, that Whitefield was not a wise man for himself. He was lavish of his resources. He seems to have had not one selfish or ambitious object, — no pride of a leader, no forecast to provide for organizing a party, with institutions, codes, badges, and rulers, which might perpetuate his name, and sustain the interest which his presence had excited. Instead of seeking to break up episcopacy or presbyterianism, or religious societies of any name, that he might bring the dispersed flocks into his fold, he sought only for hearers ; it mattered not what were their opinions or forms, or their places and sea-

sons of worship. If he could wake up the languid preachers of the time to more effective ministration, they might keep their titles, cathedrals, revenues, and congregations. God's purpose would be accomplished, and he knew no other.

But he has his monuments. One of them is, that with Christians at the present day, differing from each other in many points which they deem important, he is remembered with equal affection, respect, and gratitude. There are even churchmen, who delight to trace to Whitefield a change in preaching among no small portion of their body ; there is more of sound doctrine, it is thought, more of the Thirty-Nine Articles, and more solemn and fervid delivery, since he, a priest of their own order, shook the pillars of their ancient temples with his new mountain-trumpet.

Again, it is his monument, that he was foremost, even when a stripling, among those godly men, in and out of the Establishment, laymen and clergy, who set themselves against the skepticism and indevoutness of the age. It was a time to come out and speak ardently to high and low, as if they had hearts and consciences, and an endless future, and business, and pleasures, and woes that were not of this world. We doubt not, that the secret influence of his character and preaching has descended and now rests on thousands who never heard his name.

His humblest monument was his most precious gem, — the Orphan-House in Georgia. The popular London preacher, the eloquent youth, whom old and young were following with love or hate, some trembling for their salvation, some for the safety of the church and the good order of society, and some to mock at the fanatic, — in the midst of all this public ferment and personal importance, and fond as he was of society and of crowds, and deficient, as he acknowledges himself to be, in natural bravery, — is preparing to leave all and follow the Wesleys to an infant settlement upon our southern shores, with the wild Indian and the hostile Spaniard for his neighbours, and a few rich and a few poor people for the objects of his Christian exertions. There were poor people at least, and it was enough. To build a house for a few orphans, where they might be fed and clothed and taught, was enough. He could preach in every town along our coast, he could return again and again to England, to preach for this humble charity, and gratefully receive in half-pence the donations of

his Moorfields' thousands. Here was no boyish passion, that died in the first pulsation. It was a great and darling object of his life. He could count at his death but one hundred and eighty-three children who had been regularly educated and provided for at this school for thirty years ; but the insignificance of the establishment gave him no uneasiness, if good was done to any. If the charity had expired with him, it should still be remembered as an interpreter of his mind and purposes. It survives, we believe, in its primitive humility.

How far the numerous societies which Whitefield formed, may be brought forward as his present memorials, we cannot say. We are told, that, "in general, they have subsided into other churches, especially in America." It is certain, that he did not covet the care and superintendence of them. He thought it would make him appear as the head of a party, and he chose to be a pilgrim to all, rather than a ruler over a particular class of Christians. It is no mean monument to have such a fact on record.

In what follows, we would direct the reader's attention to Whitefield's eloquence ; both because of itself, and because it was the chief instrument of his power, and the main outward sign of his whole character and resources. Though we can but faintly conceive it, yet we may, without much hazard, attempt to distinguish its peculiarities, and name some of its results. If the inquiry effects nothing more, it will at least serve to illustrate Whitefield himself.

He set out in life with very humble prospects. He was the son of an innkeeper, and, when the establishment was itself decaying, he served as a common drawer in the tavern, at the age of fifteen, and continued in this employment for nearly a year and a half. According to his own account, he was an idle and wicked boy, passionately fond of reading romances and plays, and somewhat noted for his elocution, and his skill in private theatrical representations, as early as his twelfth year.

At times, however, he longed for a liberal education ; and, by the kindness of friends, his wish was gratified. At nineteen he was admitted a servitor in Pembroke College, Oxford ; and here began that remarkable change in his character and life, which distinguished his whole subsequent course. He fell into the society of the Wesleys and others, who were

known at Oxford, as they now are through the world, as Methodists. His religious experiences and conversion, his severe self-denial, and mental agonies and aberrations (they are all upon record), will of course be regarded differently by different minds ; but, in his own never-changed conviction, he was made a subject of spiritual regeneration ; he had passed through an entire renewal of his nature into the image of God. His whole soul was now given to the salvation of others. At the age of twenty-one, and before taking his bachelor's degree, he was admitted into holy orders. It was a trying time for the poor youth, so exalted were his views of the sacred office, and so humble his estimate of himself. He says,

“ When I went up to the altar [to receive ordination], I could think of nothing but Samuel's standing, a little child, before the Lord, with a linen ephod. When the bishop laid his hands upon my head, my heart was melted down, and I offered up my whole spirit, soul and body, to the service of God's sanctuary.” — “ I gave myself up to be a martyr for him who hung upon the cross for me. Known unto him are all future events and contingencies. I have thrown myself blindfold, and, I trust, without reserve, into his Almighty hands. Only I would have you observe, that, till you hear of my dying for or in my work, you will not be apprized of all the preferment I expect.” — pp. 42, 43.

This is all sincere. He felt every word of it, and acted upon it to his death's day. We come now to his first sermon. He had not one to begin with, except a discourse which, he says,

“ I made for a small Christian society, and sent to a neighbouring clergyman, to convince him how unfit I was to take upon me the important work of preaching. He kept it for a fortnight, and then sent it back with a guinea for the loan of it, telling me he had divided it into two, and had preached it, morning and evening, to his congregation. With this sermon I mean to begin, God willing, next Sunday.” — p. 43.

He accordingly preached it at his native town, in the church where he had been baptized, and had first received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Though so young, and in a crowd of those who knew him in his infant and childish days, he spoke with authority and effect, and says, he soon found the unspeakable advantage of having been ac-

customed to public speaking when a boy at school. He adds,

“I have heard that a complaint had been made to the bishop, that I drove fifteen mad by the first sermon. The worthy prelate, as I am informed, wished that the madness might not be forgotten before next Sunday.”—p. 44.

His preparation for his profession will appear very moderate to those who know that learning and reflection were as much needed by a preacher of those days, as now; and especially, if he set up for a reformer both in doctrine and manners. But we are speaking of one who is not to be estimated in any respect by ordinary rules, and who always trusted chiefly to his power over men’s hearts and wills. If Oxford did little for him as a scholar, yet while there he had sought out the poor and the prisoner as objects of spiritual influence; and, at the very commencement of his preaching, his thoughts were fixed upon his American voyage, with a like benevolent purpose. And it is not long before he finds that, in a spiritual sense, the poor and the prisoner make up the great mass of mankind in all places and conditions. So that the rudest part of his early training was no small part of his preparation for the great work of his after life.

We have full statements, from his own pen, of the first-fruits of his preaching in Bristol and London. He says, “Last week, save one, I preached ten times in the different churches, and the last week, seven, and yesterday, four times, and read prayers twice, though I slept not an hour the night before, which was spent in religious conversation.” (p. 51.) And it is important to remember, that the preacher is a clergyman of the established church, and not an erratic, highflying Dissenter in conventicle, chapel, or tabernacle. He proceeds thus;

“Last Sunday, in St. Dunstan’s, at six in the morning, when I gave my farewell, the whole church was drowned in tears. Since that, there is no end of persons coming and weeping, telling me what God has done for their souls. Others, again, beg little books, and desire me to write their names in them.”—(p. 51.)

At Bristol, such was the pressure in every church, that he could hardly make his way to the reading-desk. He says,

“Some hung upon the rails of the organ loft, others climbed

upon the leads of the church, and altogether made the church so hot with their breath, that the steam would fall from the pillars like drops of rain.”—p. 50.

Such was the commencement of his memorable thirty years' preaching. A new power was in action ; a new voice among lethargic hearers and preachers ; a spiritual energy, that seemed ready to sweep away forms and rituals, and even to bring the decencies of worship into disrepute. He held nothing in respect, which, as he thought, lulled men's consciences, and substituted lifeless habits or ceremonial pageantry, for a sacrifice of heart and life to God. And, though he comes forth under the wing of the ancient hierarchy, his whole bearing is that of a fearless reformer, fixed upon acting out an idea of his own. No one ever thinks of asking, whether this young man was not seeking preferment, and making trouble to be bribed to peace. If he were a machine, he could scarcely be less conscious of self, either as to his power or his objects. He is, on the contrary, too much absorbed in the concerns of others. He has not studied himself enough. He meets the world with affections, strong desires, ardent sympathy. His heart is poured out like water. Calculation, discrimination, safe judgment, are not in him. He estimates men, and the power of improving them, by his wishes, and not by a wisely-applied experience. He brings the homeliness and ardor of the Reformers into a very different age. And, whatever his error, he owes his success to this ready meeting, this seeking of other people's hearts.

We should try to conceive how Whitefield's new method of pulpit eloquence struck the London population. His doctrine was in no respect new ; but we know, that to insist strongly upon a single old topic is almost making it new. He insisted upon change of heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, as essential life. There was none other. He cared not for rites, as having any virtue in themselves. Every man must be converted or perish ; and he was set to urge this fact upon high and low, till they should feel what *perishing* and what *conversion* meant. To this work he went with the fire of heroism, but with none of its selfishness and ambition. He went with the avowed consciousness of power swelling almost to inspiration, but all the time heightening his sense of responsibility, and calling forth more intense effort. There is no room or motive for exaggeration in describing this

higher than romantic enterprise. It may cost us some pains to take in all the circumstances of the case ; but, if we can conceive of consummate oratory, a burning spirit of devotion and benevolence, and horror at the degradation and ruin in which sin plunges the soul, all acting together to kindle religious feeling, or produce some undefined spiritual movement, in the masses of a thronged town, till scoffers were silenced, the indifferent aroused, and the most abandoned moved to call for mercy, we shall understand the language in which he sounded his London triumphs, and feel little surprise that the effect, for the time at least, was overwhelming.

No doubt, the traits of character we discern and admire in Whitefield, may be found in others. Ardor, enthusiasm, devotion to a single point or cause, terrifying or melting appeals, addressed with effect to the obdurate, the stupid, the grossly wicked, — these, certainly, are not strange facts or qualities in the history of orators. He was by no means the only one, among churchmen or Dissenters, who set himself zealously against the skeptical and irreligious spirit of the age. If he was the first, and eminently the great field-preacher, since the apostolic time, this is but an accident in the case, and scarcely an explanation of the interest and celebrity that are still attached to his name. The singularity of his adventure could do little more than distinguish him as one of the most remarkable of eccentric men. We may better account for his influence then, and his present importance, by his fearless example of devoting the whole of his life and strength to the support of a vast spiritual interest, in any way that gave promise of success. It was not a popular cause, nor a worldly good, that he was engaged in. The same power and devotedness, turned in another direction, might have brought him present profit. He certainly might have avoided contempt and personal outrage. But we see every moment, that what he sacrificed or endured is always a second thought with him, if considered at all. His eye is ever upon his object. The turns of popularity, the alienation of old friends, — even of those with whom he first took counsel in Christian fellowship, in the days of bitter trial, — the dull hardships of his frequent voyages, his many painful journeys to collect money for his Orphan-House (and which he was charged by his foes with not accounting for), and all this expenditure of labor for an obscure charity, which could

give him no name in the world, and offer no worldly excitement ; — these, certainly, were things to exhaust the spirits. But with him they were as nothing to break or weaken his purpose, though he weeps for a sundered friendship, and repels an assault upon his reputation, with as warm a human feeling as if he had lived upon the breath of opinion, and the sweet solaces of home.

This, then, is the explanation of his power, — the subduing and forgetfulness of self, that he might give all to the spiritual advancement of others. He seems to have no home, no possessions, and no prospect or desire of either. When a private contribution was proposed for him in Edinburgh, he said, “I will not admit of any such thing. I make no purse. What I have, I give away. ‘Poor, yet making many rich,’ shall be my motto still.” (p. 236.) He must be for ever at work ; and Foster names him, “as a noble instance of that attribute of the decisive character, — the intense necessity of action.” And action with him requires change of place, succession of objects, public scenes. His consuming zeal admits of no repose, and is fed by agitation. He says, “Every thing I meet with seems to carry this voice with it, — ‘Go thou, and preach the gospel ; be a pilgrim on earth ; have no party, or certain dwelling-place.’ My heart echoes back, ‘Lord Jesus, help me to do or suffer thy will. When thou seest me in danger of *nestling*, — in pity, in tender pity, put a *thorn* in my nest, to prevent me from it.’” (p. 348.) His itinerary, or ranging, as he called it, was his delight. Others might adopt it, after deliberating upon the general utility of the practice, and its efficacy as part of a scheme of ecclesiastical tactics. But he followed it from some uncontrollable impulse.

Is the occasion for such devotedness wholly gone ? Does the case alter with the creed a man subscribes, or the character of the church he addresses ? We do not ask, whether a preacher is to show his zeal in the same way with Whitefield ; but is equal zeal less wanted now, or will it be ever less wanted, till sin has passed off from the earth ? If not, then Whitefield, the Calvinist, the Methodist, the itinerant, the field-preacher, “the hunter of souls,” as he styles himself, is, in one point at least, an example for all who preach what they believe to be the word of God.

We are prepared now, in some degree, for his most char-

acteristic, and, as many think, most questionable, exhibition of himself ; that is, as a field-preacher. This practice he began soon after his first return from Georgia in 1739, when he was twenty-five years of age. The history of this adventure may be given in few words. He had already discovered his power over others, and over himself, in extemporaneous preaching and prayer. He saw, that "myriads of people, who never troubled any church, nor were likely to do so," were glad of an opportunity to attend the private, devotional meetings of the Methodists. So long as he was permitted to preach in the churches, multitudes pressed to hear him, for whom there was no room ; and even this privilege was soon withdrawn, as his course was considered altogether against the canons of the church. He was not allowed to collect money for his Orphan-House in those very churches where he had often preached with success for the London charities. These things, no doubt, had their effect in suggesting the idea of preaching in the open air. But there is good reason to think, that he rejoiced in the temptation to go out to the multitude. He loved large audiences, for they excited him. He loved a mode of preaching which dispensed with form, and suffered the orator to come to his thousands at any hour of the day or night. He was animated by the sense of freedom which this bold, unlicensed preaching inspired. With a religion, designed to be popular, for his message, he was attached to the most popular form of communicating it. He had a voice of such power and flexibility, that he found it not only easy, but, it should seem, most natural and agreeable to him, to address multitudes in the open air. He finds more than an apology for field-preaching in the example of the Saviour, who, in Whitefield's words, "had a mountain for his pulpit, and the heavens for his sounding-board ; and who, when his gospel was refused by the Jews, sent his servants into the highways and hedges." He would, most probably, have made his way to the fields, if every church in the three kingdoms had been open to him day and night.

He was nothing daunted by the strangeness of the measure ; but the more excited by what would have dismayed a man of fastidiousness and calculation. When the wealthy stopped in their coaches to hear what the madman had to say, or the mischievous assembled to annoy him by the grossest devices, or if he saw in his hearers nothing but vacant wonder, yet he

was well aware, that there was no indifference in this. Whatever the motive, he was the object of attention, and all that remained for him to do was to turn the interest, of whatever kind, to his purpose. And here his skill was matchless. He always retained his self-possession perfectly, and apparently without making those efforts to preserve it, which must in some degree lessen one's natural ardor. So that all his resources were at hand. He abounded in familiar topics and examples, and popular terms, and excelled in the art of drawing arguments and motives from present incidents and objects ; and, then, his voice and action of themselves arrested the mind, and soon set it at work in the speaker's service. A look or a motion was a picture. Call him mountebank, or fanatic, or what we will (he often deserves a hard name), it is no less the fact, that he could keep his immense and various audience together, by night or day, in rain or sunshine, and spread an awful silence far and wide, till he could address every one in a tone as if he were speaking earnestly to a neighbour.

Is it strange, that such a man loved his "field-pulpit" far better than to preach to an accustomed and select audience, in lazy seats, and hemmed in by narrow walls ? Is it even strange, that he should have been so carried out of himself, and beyond all the monitions of prudence, as to encounter the populace of Basingstoke and London, in the midst of their revels, and get upon the very stage erected for the wrestlers, to preach against the profane sport ; or set up his pulpit in Moorfields on Whit-Monday, "the great gala-day of vanity and vice," in the neighbourhood of "drummers, trumpeters, merry-andrews, masters of puppet-shows, exhibitors of wild beasts, players, &c.," who, he might be sure, would make their game of the preacher, as the best part of the day's entertainment ? If it had been always so with Whitefield, he would have had reason to say, "We shall never know what good field-preaching has done, till we come to judgment." But it was not always nor often so, even when he met the mob of cities. And the fabled power of art is scarcely to be compared with his sway over the rude colliers at Kingswood.

However we may explain the origin of his field-preaching, it soon became an essential exercise to him. When the severity of the season drives him into houses and chapels, he

speaks with regret of retiring into winter-quarters. He pines for the return of good preaching weather. "Field-sickness was his home-sickness." During an illness, occasioned by his many labors and exposures, his physicians prescribed several remedies, — silence, warmth, and, one of them, a perpetual blister. But he preferred his own remedy, "perpetual preaching. When this grand catholicon fails," said he, "it is all over with me." Sometimes his impatience was such, that he would go forth in spite of hail and rain; and his spirits returned, objects resumed their old look, and he was again at home and himself. He thus speaks of his preaching in the cold season.

"At seven in the evening, I preached in the open air, to a great multitude. All was hushed, and exceedingly solemn. The stars shone exceedingly bright. Then, if ever, I saw by the eye of faith, Him who calleth them all by their names. My soul was filled with a holy ambition, and I longed to be one of those who shall shine as the stars for ever and ever. My hands and my body were cold; but what are outward things, when the soul within is warmed by the love of God. Oh, that I may die in the field." — p. 392.

In a mild climate, beneath a soft moonlight, or the shadow of mountains or trees, with a population accustomed to be in the open air for amusement, society, or business, and affected from early years by the soothing or romantic influences of natural scenes, we should see nothing extraordinary in out-of-door preaching, any more than in music upon the lake or river side. There would be no profanation, and no violation of taste in either; but rather a gracious harmony, between the purest of sentiments and the religious beauty of nature. Even the vision of Jacob seems to gain something from the place and hour, —

"Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cried, 'This is the gate of Heaven.' "

So the rite of baptism, by immersion, no doubt has a more imposing (why not a more spiritual?) influence, upon spectators, if it be performed on the margin of pure running water, or by the ocean side, and under a soft sky, than in foul docks on a raw day, or in a stagnant reservoir under cover. Whitefield was often favored by the scene and hour of his ministrations. He says,

"The open firmament above me, the prospect of the adja-

cent fields, with the sight of thousands and thousands, some in coaches, some on horseback, and some in the trees, and, at times, all affected and drenched in tears together,— to which was sometimes added, the solemnity of the approaching evening,— was almost too much for me, and quite overcame me.”

— pp. 105, 106.

With a little exercise of the imagination, those who are most scrupulous with regard to the proprieties of worship may find their objections subdued by the scene they can conjure up of a silent crowd, in a romantic spot, intent upon holy thoughts. Those who were present at the consecration of Mount Auburn will understand this. Suppose the assembly swelled to fifty thousand, seated on rural benches, round the wooded hill, on a day like that, when shadow and light, and the air itself, harmonize with a sober, yet elevated sentiment, in all ; and then suppose every eye and heart turned to one eloquent man, whose voice penetrates every nook, as easily as the tide seeks every inlet of the coast,— and we may have some idea of Whitefield and his audience. We may say, that this is mere exhibition, a gratification of the senses, or at best a source of poetical meditation and rapture ; and that the religious part of the occasion is but one of the circumstances. This is possible. But the important consideration is, and the only one we have in view,— how easily the devout sentiment may be made predominant and overwhelming, and permanent too, when these influences from abroad take a decidedly religious direction, and when in after life the clear image of such scenes as we now speak of, is readily associated with devout feelings.

We are far from recommending field-preaching, as a general practice. We do not recommend it at all ; but would speak fairly of its advantages, and remove fallacious objections against it. No one can say, that we have discovered the only true or the best method of communicating religious instruction. And few will doubt, that Whitefield accomplished more good in this way, than he would have done in churches alone. It brought him into connexion with more hearers ; and, which is more important, with the ignorant, poor, and vicious, whom he would have sought in vain within the walls of a church. If it be objected, that a riotous mob, swarming from the foul dens of a large town, is not a fit audience for a preacher of divine truth, and that he is to be

blamed for exposing it to vulgar contempt, — the objection shows distrust, not only of the power of oratory, but of the power of the religious principle in all men, and of that spiritual striving in the dark, which needs only a ray from heaven, however imperfectly and accidentally it may come, to be changed into rapture, and at last into peaceful assurance. Whitefield ran very little risk of bringing religion into dis-honor by offering it to his wild audience, except when he grossly violated prudence and decorum, and became as much a rioter himself, as those whom he denominates the instruments of Satan.

But, though field-preaching has its advantages in certain hands, and in peculiar circumstances, we cannot overlook the obvious inconveniences and dangers, that would follow from its coming into general use. It would introduce a violent and rudely passionate style of oratory, partly from the necessity of the case, where so many are addressed in the open air, and partly from the reaction of listening and agitated throngs upon the speaker himself. From the promiscuous assembling of men and women, of the aged and young, strangers to each other, and of course unrestrained by daily intimacies and familiar objects, and by common habits of thought and feeling, we may expect excessive and false agitation ; and vast immediate results will be looked for, and unduly estimated. We lose what many deem the incalculable good of the orderly meeting of households in one church. We must, in a great measure, lose the undoubted assistance which worshipping in the same place affords, by recalling the religious feelings that we have associated with familiar objects. And, finally, we put in jeopardy the support of stated worship, to which much importance is reasonably attached, as upholding good habits and cherishing calm sentiments.

Whitefield's triumphs were not limited to the poorer classes and to field-preaching. In Scotland, least liable of all to give way to impulse, he was sought after by all conditions, and by divided Christians. In America, toward which his heart yearned to the end, he was received with delight by ministers, rulers, and people. In his frequent visits to this country, he passed through it again and again, as a religious agitator and an asker of alms for his school, and apparently without the charm of his appeals being broken or weakened. He preached before the colleges, and at the

tables of magistrates ; in the churches, and sometimes in the fields ; and, in his own view, with such success, that his hope for Scotland is, that she may be like New England. The business of common life seems to have been suspended, that the whole population might go forth to hear the young stranger. That he was opposed by many, and deserved rebuke, is not disputed. Our object is to show, that he had power in different spheres.

If we turn now to high life in England, we shall find him no less successful there in drawing attention. As chaplain of the Countess Dowager of Huntingdon, who was one of his most determined proselytes, he was brought into the society of people of fashion. Wits, accomplished infidels, nobles, the last to follow a Methodist, unless as they would seek out any odd thing to relieve their dull, jaded lives, — these are among his hearers, and some are his disciples. They attend upon him once, and desire to hear him again. Chesterfield thanks him, and Whitefield preaches at his chapel, or rather in Bretby park, for the chapel was soon found to be too small. Bolingbroke comes and tells him, if the Bible is true, Whitefield's views of Christian doctrine are incontrovertible, and his Lordship is ready to vindicate the Methodist against all his revilers. Even the king is apprized of the new power, that is at work among the nobles and wits, and has his jest at Lady Chesterfield, one of the converts, for the simplicity of her dress.

It is needless to say more of his successes among the high-born and learned, whether in London or in the rural chapels. We do not refer to them as being much in his favor. The dignity of a convert is of little moment. And who can escape wholly the fascination of praise from those who in any way excel us ? It is social as well as selfish in us to be pleased with it. Whitefield was safer in the wilderness and among the weeping colliers. He feels his danger. When the nobility graciously accepted copies of his sermons, he said, " Thus the world turns round. In all time of wealth, good Lord deliver me." He says, it took him twice seven years of pretty close intimacy with contempt, to make contempt an agreeable companion ; and he discovers, that a love of power and distinction sometimes intoxicates even God's dear children.

We have no reason to think, that Whitefield preached very

differently before his fashionable, and his less educated audiences. He would have risked much, if he had been careful to adapt his discourse and manner to particular tastes ; and he knew the secret of his subject and of his power too well, to stand in awe of his hearers, or even distrust his own poorest matter. What in reading may appear to us little better than a rambling and empty rhapsody, was sustained and borne to the heart by a voice that prepared a way. The hearer was soon transported far above the sphere of criticism. Whether he listened to denunciation, appeals, or invitation, or to question crowding on question, and whether clothed in language of Scripture, or of the market, or of polite life, a power he could not resist kept him always in advance of the speaker, with a conscience ready to tremble and a heart to break, while the word yet hung upon the lips of the prophet. What mere lover of art would not rejoice to have been present, when Whitefield, after he had ruled his vast audience in the fields, paused, and, as in a whisper, communed with the multitude upon the awful silence and the falling tears ?

We have room but for one or two of the reports which have been transmitted of his manner. The first is from Hume. He says, "Once, after a solemn pause, Whitefield thus addressed his audience. 'The attendant angel is just about to leave the threshold of this sanctuary, and ascend to heaven. And shall he ascend, and not bear with him the news of one sinner, among all this multitude, reclaimed from the error of his ways ?' To give the greater effect to this exclamation, Whitefield stamped with his foot, lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, and cried aloud, 'Stop, Gabriel, stop, ere you enter the sacred portals, and yet carry with you the news of one sinner converted to God.' This address was accompanied with such animated, yet natural action, that it surpassed any thing I ever heard or saw in any other preacher."*

To what a height must he have carried his art, how perfect a master must he have been of natural expression, if his ut-

* A less showy but more striking testimony to his eloquence may be found in the following anecdote, which we take from Southey's "Life of Wesley." "A ship-builder was once asked what he thought of Whitefield. 'Think !' he replied, 'I tell you, Sir, every Sunday that I go to my parish church, I can build a ship from stem to stern under the sermon ; but, were it to save my soul, under Mr. Whitefield, I could not lay a single plank.'"

most extravagances, so far from offending, could bear away a cold, fastidious, and irreligious hearer.

Mr. Philip says, "He left nothing to accident which he could regulate by care in his delivery. Foote and Garrick maintained, that his oratory was not at its full height, until he had repeated a discourse forty times."

Franklin's testimony is as follows :

"By hearing him often, I came to distinguish easily between sermons newly composed, and those he had preached often in the course of his travels. His delivery of the latter was so improved by frequent repetition, that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of voice, was so perfectly well turned and well placed, that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleased with the discourse ; a pleasure of much the same kind with that received from an excellent piece of music." — p. 527.

According to Southey, in his "Life of Wesley," these repetitions were far from being in precisely the same words. He recited instead of reading his sermons.

"Had they been delivered," continues Southey, "from a written copy, one delivery would have been like the last ; the paper would have operated as a spell, from which he could not depart ; invention sleeping, while the utterance followed the eye. But when he had nothing before him except the audience whom he was addressing, the judgment and the imagination, as well as the memory, were called forth. Those parts were omitted, which had been felt to come feebly from the tongue, and fall heavily on the ear ; and their place was supplied by matter newly laid in, in the course of his studies, or fresh from the feeling of the moment."

Let the modern preacher, however free from fanaticism, remember and ponder this well. Let those who think it enough to be sincere, and well provided with pertinent matter, remember, that Whitefield was as sincere as they can be, and felt the authority of his high credentials, and the dignity of his message, and that it was his duty to preach, and that words and matter and an ardent nature would never fail him ; and yet that, to the end, he studied oratory with the diligence of a novice, and brought the vast power within him to a perfection, and a prompt use, which probably have never been surpassed. Hence, his equal sway over the ignorant and the cultivated. It was not the strangeness of the thing, that

amazed people ; nor yet his stamping, and sobbing, and tears, and shrieks, and thunders ; but the perfect skill with which he could bring these, and every other sign of emotion, to bear upon the heart and conscience of another man, let his powers or education or rank be what they might.

It is unnecessary to name the many topics connected with the life of Whitefield, which, as not entering into the limited notice we proposed to take of him, have been entirely passed over. As the view we have given of him may not have placed his defects and errors in a sufficiently clear light for a full understanding of his character, we will dwell upon them for a moment in closing.

Near the beginning of this article we observed, that his errors were useful. But, upon considering them in connexion with the peculiar temper of his mind, we are inclined to doubt the justness of the remark, except, possibly, in relation to the few cases, where we may be called upon to check the irregular sallies of young minds, similarly constituted to his, and in which extravagance in opinions, desires, and enterprises, has not yet become a habit and fixed disease. Without adopting the perilous notion, that the tendencies of genius, or of strong original temperament, cannot be safely interfered with, though the object only be to save one from painful deviations, and a mad expenditure of strength, we yet think, that men generally are not willing enough to let remarkable persons be useful instruments, without insisting that they should also be useful examples. We demand a perfection of character, because we behold a miracle of important action. A well-balanced mind, where there is a great deal to be balanced, is expected, instead of being wondered at.

If we judge Whitefield in this way, we apply an unreasonable test. He was in a fever from the time of his conversion. To restore him to health, as it is called, would have been next to making another man of him, and most probably at the sacrifice of his energy and ardor ; for these evidently belonged to a confirmed proneness to run into excesses in every thing, and to make experiments in the dark, and at great hazard, from which a prudent and vigilant mind would have shrunk. Even his most deliberate actions, his care for his American school, and his constant study of oratory, are means or signs of a spirit strongly tinged with extravagance.

To propose such a man, then, as an example or warning,

generally, or to treat seriously the questions, whether he should have been suffered to go at large, and whether he would not have been happier if reduced by a physician to sound reason and lethargy, would show, that we did not enter fully and heartily into the case. Here is a man, exercising an extraordinary influence over numberless minds in all classes, for more than thirty years, and ceasing only with his life ; and the fact, when we take all the circumstances into the account, is an exceedingly curious one. Let it then be considered by itself ; and let his deficiencies be examined, chiefly that we may the better understand his whole character and course.

He was in many respects a weak man. He wanted soundness of mind, and the disposition to think and compare before determining. He wanted that self-mastery, which puts it in a man's power to consider, at the outset, what faculties and what processes are needed and will profit him in a new enterprise, and which enables him to apply correctives in the midst of the severest and most ardent exercises of his mind, and to do this with instinctive readiness and fitness. With Whitefield, a sudden movement of his heart stood in the place of all reasonings or prudence, and was of higher authority. He took it for a sign from heaven ; and a man who, in his sense of the words, “throws himself blindfold into the hands of God,” is very little disposed to distrust the grounds of any determination, or the sources of any impression. Hence, perfect confidence in himself, and the power to gain the perfect confidence of all whose hearts he could reach ; while the sober-minded would incline to look on him with pity or contempt, or, at best, with admiration of his eloquence as a remarkable specimen of art.

He had abundant talent and resource for every contingency which required feeling, or which he could bring within the sphere of feeling. And, strange as it may seem, the very eloquence which he so deliberately and diligently studied, and with so clear a sense of its importance as a means, was as heartfelt as his spontaneous raptures and agonies in his private hours. Everybody felt that it was so. The oratorical devices practised by him, time after time, before multitudes, were, at the moment of repetition, as sincere as a child's tears, and had the effect of sincerity. His power was always from passion. He had little or nothing of that dry sagacity and shrewd notice of others and of himself, which are not

unfrequently associated with the grossest fanaticism and self-delusion. He was under the control of impulse in all things ; and, though we call him madman, or child, or seraph, we all have equally in view this single characteristic of the man.

We have instances of his weakness in his uniting spiritual pride with professions of humility, and in his violent transitions from religious rapture to the most abject self-condemnation. We see his weakness, in the importance he attached to impressions, impulses, dreams, coincidences, and the drawing of lots. One would think, that he was always on the look-out for something preternatural ; or that his experience was so far above that of common mortals, that he lived in the midst of miracles, as his ordinary state. A wrong estimate of self leads naturally to a wrong judgment and treatment of others. He was sure, that he had the living witness of the Spirit to the truth of his favorite doctrines, and, as might be expected, he held the convictions of another who differed from him, as nought. He begs his old master, Wesley, not to be strenuous in opposing the doctrines of election and final perseverance, and adds, as an argument for the other's silence, " My doctrines I had from Christ and his apostles ; I was taught them of God ; and, as God was pleased to send me out first, and to enlighten me first, so I think he still continues to do it." We may imagine how the founder of Methodism would regard such language from his eager and confident disciple.

And yet the Wesleys themselves are chargeable with the weakness of holding those to be unconverted who do not think as they do. They wrote upon the tomb of their excellent mother, that she had " mourned a legal night of seventy years " ; that is, she was not brought to a true sense of Christianity till that late period of a most exemplary religious life. Whitefield records his meeting with a clergyman nearly eighty years of age, who had lately preached three times in one day, and ridden forty miles ; but, he adds, " He is not above *one* year old in the school of Christ. Dear Hervey laid the blessed foundation, whilst a curate here." Again, he comes to New England to convert the ministers, and to tell the students of our college, with no small grief, that their light was darkness, and this too from a young man and a foreigner to the descendants of the Pilgrims, a little more than a century from the landing of the Fathers. But he had re-

proved even Wesley, and separated from him, for what he deemed his errors in doctrine. He had said, that Archbishop Tillotson knew no more about religion than Mahomet. And could less exclusiveness have been expected from him towards the dignitaries of Yale and Harvard ? His presumptuous appropriation of truth is seen in the declaration, that “if Jesus Christ be not very God of very God, I would never preach the Gospel of Christ again ; for it would not be gospel. It would only be a system of ethics. Seneca, Cicero, or any of the Gentile philosophers, would be as good a Saviour as Jesus of Nazareth.” “If Jesus Christ be no more than a mere man, if he be not truly God, he was the vilest sinner that ever appeared in the world ; for he accepted of divine adoration from the man who had been born blind.”* Whitefield could use this language, and yet rebuke Wesley for “pawning his salvation, in a late hymn-book, if the doctrine of universal redemption be not true.” Thus it is with men of hot and inflated minds, who are possessed with an idea of their own light, which makes all dark beyond their limited vision.

We might in this way take separate instances of weakness and self-ignorance, till Whitefield should appear to many as little better than a hypocrite, or a driveller, or one drunk with self-conceit. And yet the chief impression received from his whole history is that of a warm-hearted, benevolent, devoted preacher and sufferer in behalf of what he believed essential to human salvation. His errors are from the same source with his virtues and his usefulness ; and they furnish another proof, that a sound intellectual education from early years is needed by those whose religious tendencies are the strongest.

* We borrow these passages from what Hervey describes as “that sweet sermon which was a special means of bringing me to the knowledge of the truth.” It is the twenty-fourth sermon in the collected Works, (1772.)